

HIGH QUALITY FOOD CERTIFICATION MARK SCHEME

KMÉ

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(KMÉ)

CERTIFICATION MARK SCHEME

# **SPECIFIC CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

**Mascarpone cheese**

Budapest, October 2025

## Mascarpone cheese

Applications for the award of KMÉ and KMÉ gold grade marks may be submitted for fresh, natural cream cheese, including lactose-free products, produced exclusively from pasteurised cream and cow's milk by acid coagulation, with permitted acids for food, a lactic culture mixture and lactose-free products, which is a creamy, homogeneous and non-foamed product to be kept at cooling temperature and possibly undergoing post-heat treatment.

### Mandatory elements

The product must comply with the applicable Hungarian and EU legislations and the following criteria:

#### Ingredients that may be used

- a) cream,
- b) cow's milk,
- c) citric acid, lemon juice,
- d) lactic acid,
- e) lactic acid bacteria pure cultures.

#### Composition

- fat content in the dry matter: 60–90 %
- Maximum water content: 60 %

#### Sensory requirements

Outer (colour)	Its colour may vary between white and pale yellow which is typical of butter.
Internal (perforation)	Its texture is completely homogeneous, with no smaller lumps or holes.
Consistency	Creamy, well lubricated, melts well in the mouth, knot-free, non-adhesive.
Odour	Reminiscent of cream, free of foreign odours.
Taste	Neutral, creamy, very slightly sour, free of foreign taste, reminiscent of butter.

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## Microbiological conditions

- *Salmonella*: 0/25 g
- *E. coli*: n=5 c=2 m=10 M=10<sup>2</sup>
- *Listeria monocytogenes*:
  - o n=5 0/25 g before the food is removed from the direct control of the food business operator producing it
  - o n=5 100 cfu/g for products placed on the market during their shelf-life
- Coagulase-positive *Staphylococcus*: n=5 c=2 m=10 M=100

## Optional elements

Applications for the High Quality Food (KMÉ) and High Quality Food Gold Grade trademarks may be submitted for products that, in addition to the above-mentioned mandatory requirements, also comply with at least one point in each of the optional element categories of I and II.

### I. Production process

#### Self-monitoring and self-testing

1. Full in-plant self-monitoring (for organoleptic, analytical and microbiological parameters as defined in the KMÉ) of the product per batch. It shall include at least the following analytical parameters:
  - fat content,
  - dry matter content,
  - net weight.
2. Use of methods in the holding with which the production processes, product quality and hygiene are regularly checked. Based on the findings, corrective measures are put in place, good practices are identified and staff are trained accordingly.
3. The processor shall include in the supplier contracts that it will only accept milk and cream from the dairy farm with an aflatoxin M1 content not exceeding the limit, which it shall check for itself in all batches of raw milk and/or cream delivered to and accepted at the plant. The testing method must be such that it can be used to verify compliance with the upper limits specified in the applicable regulation on the maximum levels of certain contaminants in foodstuffs.
4. Product analysis within the framework of self-monitoring: creation of a quality control chart for the graphical representation of analytical and microbiological values, indicating guidance values, a warning threshold and/or limit values. These values shall be compared to the actual data collected from self-testing, and, if necessary, appropriate measures shall be taken.

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5. Tests shall be carried out in external laboratories under the self-monitoring scheme with regard to the following criteria:
  - sensory,
  - fat content,
  - dry matter content,
  - non-milk fat, where vegetable fat is also used in the plant,
  - microbiology (for micro-organisms included in the product specification),
  - net weight,
  - lactose content in the case of a lactose-free product

A minimum of nine random samples from different production batches (produced and dispatched for marketing in the given year) shall be examined annually in a way that at least one sample is included from each calendar quarter.

#### Milk processing methods

6. Product produced from milk with proven higher content values (e.g. higher Ca/protein content).
7. Conformity with higher hygiene requirements during the production process: inspection of microbiological parameters contained in Annex 4 to Decree No 4/1998 of the Minister for Health of 11 November 1998 on the allowable limits of microbiological contamination of foodstuffs 3 times a month from raw milk and cream arriving at the plant as raw material.
8. Batch-based self-monitoring, focusing on the production process (from the receipt of the raw milk/cream until the delivery of the finished product).
9. Basic Substances Evaluation/Supplier program to analyse trends from the results of raw milk/cream laboratory (heat, fat, pH, density, freezing point, protein, acidity, lactose).
10. Closed production technology.
11. Use of raw milk with KMÉ trademark.
12. Eligibility to use the “Tejszív” [Milk Heart] logo.

#### Animal husbandry (the production process of the input)

13. Feeding of GMO-free production feed.
14. Certified organic farming (not optional in combination with point 33).
15. Participation in the agri-environmental scheme (AKG programme).
16. The farm has a valid Global GAP animal welfare certification.
17. The farm receives EU funding for animal welfare.
18. Where the milk processor is also a milk producer, an aflatoxin test carried out and documented at least once a quarter of the feedstuffs fed (including own-grown fodder and any feedstuffs purchased (mass, fodder, supplementary premixes)).

#### Use of consumer-friendly packaging

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19. A favourable packaging solution that can be clearly distinguished in terms of convenience and practicality from the packaging of other similar products available on the market. In the case of consumer-friendly packaging, sustainability aspects as defined in optional element category II shall also be taken into consideration. Consumer-friendly packaging with an ecological footprint/environmental load greater than that of similar products on the market is not acceptable.

## II. Sustainability

### Environmental protection (reduction of environmental footprint, green logistics)

20. Application of eco-friendly manure treatment methods.

*Note: (The undertaking has a process in place to identify, assess and respond to environmental and social risks and opportunities. (environmentally friendly manure storage, amount of manure applied,))*

- **Use of environment friendly, renewable energy resources**

21. The holding/applicant derives part of its energy from renewable energy sources (e.g. thermal water, geothermal heat, solar panels, biogas) in the production and preparation process.

*(The undertaking has a certified green product, green service, or sells green energy (solar energy, wind energy, hydropower, biogas, geothermal energy).*

*Document to demonstrate the distribution of total and renewable electricity consumption in the last financial year).*

- **Use of sustainable management inputs/technological methods**

22. More efficient resource management, material, energy and water management, and modernisation of processing technologies that reduce environmental impact (for example regenerative heat recovery, waste heat recovery, the improvement of the efficiency of the refrigeration systems and the reduction of energy consumption).

*(It shall be demonstrated:*

*— whether it has environmental compliance/certification*

*— whether it uses a qualified green product or service for its operation.*

*It has a process in place to identify, assess and respond to environmental and social risks and opportunities.*

*It is necessary to examine what proportion of the materials used by the undertaking or by the undertakings in its value chains are recycled, reclaimed, renewable and non-renewable raw materials /circular economy/.)*

23. Energy recovery system on production machines.

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*(For example, the use of any equipment that captures and transmits the waste heat of the compressor. Recycling of thermal energy for other industrial processes that require heat or steam).*

24. Application of an Environmental Management System (EMS) or EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) in accordance with standard MSZ EN ISO 14001:2015, certifying environmental compliance.

*(Preparation of annual reports which provide information about the energy use, waste management, water use and other environmental impacts.)*

25. Certified and regularly used environmentally friendly and/or water-saving cleaning products and detergents.

*(Certifications, safety data sheets, specifications, trademarks on the packaging. Certificates from certification bodies, e.g. Ecocert, Green Certification, Breeam, Leed.)*

26. Utilization of by-products, minimisation of product and material losses.

*(The undertaking has a process in place to identify, assess and respond to environmental and social risks and opportunities. The undertaking uses raw materials, secondary raw materials produced from waste in accordance with circular economy principles, and the circular economy requirements are taken into account in the design of the product, including the packaging of the product.)*

27. Operation of an environmentally sound waste management system. Separate waste collection and recycling, in a documented form.

*(The undertaking is authorised to handle, collect, transport, store and dispose of persistent organic pollutants in a non-polluting way once they become waste.)*

28. Efficient and environmentally friendly waste water treatment technology (e.g. biological waste water treatment).

29. Verified decrease in specific water use.

*(E.g. use of effluent hot water from installations for secondary cleaning tasks, drip irrigation, rainwater collection and recycling, grey water recycling.)*

- **Green rating**

30. Official proof of a recognised, certified sustainability rating in accordance with the EU legislation in force (e.g., but not limited to: EcoVadis, B Corp, BREEAM, LEED, ISCC).

31. Green sourcing policy, documented: prioritising suppliers that have made sustainability investments.

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*(The undertaking makes its suppliers carry out an environmental assessment of the products and/or services. Demonstration of the proportion in which suppliers use, for example, renewable energy sources, whether they take into account the building energy aspects, whether they operate an environmentally sound waste system, minimise the environmental impact of the logistics network and that of transport.)*

32. The undertaking has a Science Based Target Initiative (SPTI) commitment.

33. The raw material used in the production of the product comes from certified organic or extensive farming or has a reduced environmental footprint for which there is other scientific evidence. (not optional together with point 14)

*(E.g. products labelled as organic, environmentally friendly product or service.)*

- **Use of eco-friendly packaging solutions**

34. Application of an eco-friendly packaging solution for packaged products (reduced packaging size or alternative packaging materials e.g. compostable (FSC or PEFC logo)).

35. Suppliers of primary packaging material that comes into contact with the product shall have BRC or IFS PACsecure certification.

- **Transport**

36. The main component comes to the processing plant from own holding or from within a distance of 100 km.

*(Place of production, the production and/or processing site may be located within a distance of 100 km.)*

37. Feed is delivered from within a distance of 100 km.

38. Live animals are transported within a radius of 100 km.

39. Transport optimisation, route planning to reduce emissions.

*(Lean & Green program)*

40. The product shall be delivered to the consumer within a short supply chain.

## **Social aspects**

41. Existence of SMETA (Supplier Ethical Data Exchange) audit.

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42. Prevention of food waste through donation.

43. Prevention of food waste by preventing waste generation in production and logistics.

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